

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

CIVIL MINUTES - GENERAL

Case No.	CV 17-1719 PA (FFMx)	Date	March 6, 2017
Title	David Bryant v. ABM Parking Services		

Present: The Honorable		PERCY ANDERSON, UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE	
V.R. Vallery		Not Reported	
Deputy Clerk		Court Reporter	
Attorneys Present for Plaintiffs:		Attorneys Present for Defendants:	
None		None	
		Tape No.	

Proceedings: IN CHAMBERS - COURT ORDER

Before the Court is a Notice of Removal filed by defendant ABM Onsite Services - West, Inc. dba ABM Parking Services ("Defendant"). In its Notice of Removal, Defendant asserts that this Court has jurisdiction over the action brought against it by plaintiff David Bryant ("Plaintiff") based on the Court's diversity jurisdiction. See 28 U.S.C. § 1332.

Federal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction, having subject matter jurisdiction only over matters authorized by the Constitution and Congress. See, e.g., Kokkonen v. Guardian Life Ins. Co., 511 U.S. 375, 377, 114 S. Ct. 1673, 1675, 128 L. Ed. 2d 391 (1994). A suit filed in state court may be removed to federal court if the federal court would have had original jurisdiction over the suit. 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a). A removed action must be remanded to state court if the federal court lacks subject matter jurisdiction. 28 U.S.C. § 1447(c). "The burden of establishing federal jurisdiction is on the party seeking removal, and the removal statute is strictly construed against removal jurisdiction." Prize Frize, Inc. v. Matrix (U.S.) Inc., 167 F.3d 1261, 1265 (9th Cir. 1999). "Federal jurisdiction must be rejected if there is any doubt as to the right of removal in the first instance." Gaus v. Miles, Inc., 980 F.2d 564, 566 (9th Cir. 1992).

In attempting to invoke this Court's diversity jurisdiction, Defendant must prove that there is complete diversity of citizenship between the parties and that the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000. 28 U.S.C. § 1332. To establish citizenship for diversity purposes, a natural person must be a citizen of the United States and be domiciled in a particular state. Kantor v. Wellesley Galleries, Ltd., 704 F.2d 1088, 1090 (9th Cir. 1983). Persons are domiciled in the places they reside with the intent to remain or to which they intend to return. See Kanter v. Warner-Lambert Co., 265 F.3d 853, 857 (9th Cir. 2001). "A person residing in a given state is not necessarily domiciled there, and thus is not necessarily a citizen of that state." Id. For the purposes of diversity jurisdiction, a corporation is a citizen of any state where it is incorporated and of the state where it has its principal place of business. 28 U.S.C. § 1332(c); see also Indus. Tectonics, Inc. v. Aero Alloy, 912 F.2d 1090, 1092 (9th Cir. 1990).

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In support of its allegations that the Court possesses diversity jurisdiction, the Notice of Removal alleges: “Defendant is informed and believes that Plaintiff is a citizen of the State of California, and was a citizen at the time of the filing of the Complaint. See Exh. A, ¶ 1.” (Notice of Removal ¶ 8.) As stated in the Notice of Removal, the Complaint alleges that Plaintiff “was, and now is, a resident of the City of Rancho Cucamonga, California.” (Compl. ¶ 6.) As the Notice of Removal indicates, the Complaint alleges only Plaintiff’s residence. Because the only support for Defendants’ allegation of Plaintiff’s citizenship is an allegation of residence, and residence is not the same as citizenship, the Notice of Removal’s allegations, alleged on information and belief, are insufficient to establish Plaintiff’s citizenship. “Absent unusual circumstances, a party seeking to invoke diversity jurisdiction should be able to allege affirmatively the actual citizenship of the relevant parties.” Kanter, 265 F.3d at 857; Bradford v. Mitchell Bros. Truck Lines, 217 F. Supp. 525, 527 (N.D. Cal. 1963) (“A petition [for removal] alleging diversity of citizenship upon information and belief is insufficient.”). As a result, Defendants’ allegations are insufficient to invoke this Court’s diversity jurisdiction.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Defendant has failed to meet their burden to demonstrate the Court’s diversity jurisdiction. Accordingly, the Court remands this action to Los Angeles Superior Court, Case No. BC645493. See 28 U.S.C. § 1447(c).

IT IS SO ORDERED.